



Are these three public hydrogen fueling stations in Colorado just the start?

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New Day Hydrogen and CSU snag \$9 million in federal funding for fueling stations in Fort Collins, Denver and Pueblo geared toward medium- and heavy-duty fleet vehicles. They envision much more.

by Allen Best

Colorado could have its first three commercial hydrogen fueling stations operating sometime in 2025. The market focus of the stations planned for Fort Collins, Pueblo, and the Globeville area of Denver will be on medium- and heavy-duty trucks.

"This is a historic moment," said Brian DeBruine, an investor in New Day Hydrogen, a company that partnered with Colorado State University to secure \$9 million in federal funding from the U.S. Department of Energy. "Until we have the first fuel stations, we have no hydrogen in transportation."

New Day plans to use electricity to create hydrogen from water secured from the municipal utilities of the three cities. DeBruine said restaurants use six times as much water as will be needed for hydrogen fueling stations that have about as much traffic as the typical neighborhood gas station.

The three cities were chosen for this first rollout of hydrogen fueling stations because Colorado State University has institutions in all three. The locations were also chosen because they will allow for use by commercial vehicles that operate on the Interstate 25 corridor.

Only the location in Fort Collins, at CSU's Powerhouse Energy Campus on North College Avenue, has been identified. A hydrogen station there has been planned for several decades but was slow to get municipal approval. It now has that approval.



This hydrogen fueling station has been transported to Fort Collins. Photo/New Day Hydrogen

In Pueblo, where CSU has a campus, the city has identified two locations. In Denver, New Day is looking at locations in the industrial area north of the National Western Complex, where the university now has a campus called The Spur.

New Day Hydrogen must also arrange supplies for electricity. No new substations seem to be necessary at the scale and locations planned.

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Golden has a hydrogen fueling station, but it is reserved for NREL's use.

"This is a huge validation of our vision to build early micro-hubs," said Seth Terry, the chief executive of New Day in a broadcast e-mail. He called it a "rare opportunity to launch three nodes for an emerging hydrogen fueling network along a major interstate corridor — with 80% of project costs covered by the Department of Transportation."

Terry also acknowledged an earlier grant of \$250,000 from the state's Office of Economy Development and International Trade.

Hydrogen has been almost unknown in the U.S. transportation sector with the exception of California. There, 60 fueling stations have been installed, mostly with the intent of providing fuel for passenger vehicles.

Buford Barr, the chief operating officer of New Day Hydrogen, said the Colorado project aims for a different approach. New Day hopes to build demand for hydrogen by companies who haul heavier loads and travel greater distances. In time, the company hopes to create demand sufficient to justify many more hydrogen fueling stations in metro Denver and elsewhere.

New Day has executed agreements with four organizations: Via Mobility Services, Fluid Truck, Colorado CarShare, and AAA Colorado. AAA has in mind hydrogen fueling for its service fleets, while Colorado CarShare has an interest in acquiring small commercial vehicles.

A contractor from Cheyenne has been identified as the likely builder of the stations, and NREL has agreed to be an independent third-party evaluator.

Ultimately, New Day hopes to be part of a new ecosystem for decarbonized fuel sources that will include passenger vehicles.

DeBruine cited national polls that shows only a minority of respondents saying they would be willing to buy electric cars, at least in part because of the more lengthy fueling time. Hydrogen vehicles can be refueled with about the same time as is required for gasoline or diesel.

State funds may also aid in this shift. In 2021, Colorado legislators created sources of dedicated transportation funding, including the Community Access Enterprise. That program is projected to receive approximately \$310 million to support electric vehicle charging and hydrogen fueling infrastructure.

That same law also funded two other enterprise programs, Clean Fleet and Clean Transit. New Day hopes to work with fleet operators to tap money in those programs to help them defray the higher cost of hydrogen-fueled vehicles. Some federal funds will also be available to drive down the existing cost differential.

Boulder County also reaped a \$4.9 million from the same Federal Highway Administration grant program. That money is to be used 100 electric charging stations in Boulder County's low- and moderate-low neighborhoods as well as rural areas and high-density neighborhoods.

Independent of the grants, New Day Hydrogen hopes to go forward with a hydrogen fueling station in Boulder in the area proximate to the former Valmont power plant.

These two Colorado grants were among \$623 million announced by the federal agency for projects in 22 states and Puerto Rico. Most of the money went to charging infrastructure, but the single large award, \$70 million, went to Texas, for five hydrogen fueling stations in the triangle of quadrangle of Houston, Dallas, Austin, and San Antonio.

California got grants for two hydrogen-related projects, including \$12 million for a project at Barstow, a key gateway to other Southwestern states. A \$15 million grant will support a joint hydrogen and EV-charging project in the New York City borough of the Bronx.

E&E News reports that tens of millions of dollars were allocated to construct very high-capacity chargers for battery-electric trucks. Those include almost \$64 million in New Mexico for two truck charging stations on Interstate 10 and about \$76 million for two projects along Interstate 5 and I-10.

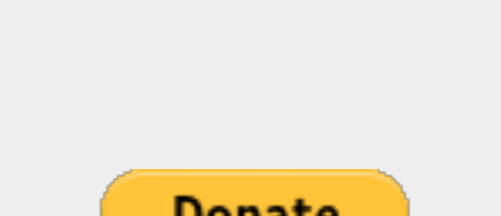
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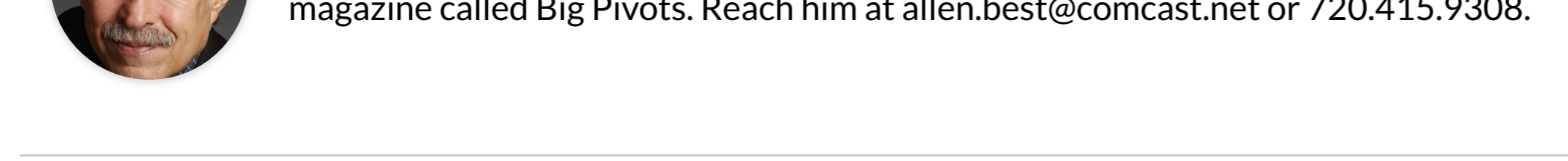


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